

City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Victoria L. Hamilton

Executive Director

(619) 236-6778

MAYOR APPOINTS NINE TO THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

San Diego, CA... Mayor Sanders announced the reappointment of Colette Carson-Royston, designating her as the Chair of the Commission for Arts & Culture. The Mayor stated that "Ms. Carson-Royston has served as Chair since September 2007. She will continue her outstanding leadership of the Commission as it continues to carry out its vital mission." Colette Carson Royston has enjoyed a long career in cancer care. As an Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist/cancer consultant her focus has been on research and education, demonstrated in numerous publications in the field of oncology and service on many healthcare-related boards. She has served on the boards of the San Diego Foundation, the San Diego Women's Foundation, San Diego Opera and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Mayor Jerry Sanders also announced the appointment of one new Commissioner and the reappointment of seven other currently-serving Commissioners to the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture. The Mayor appointed John Venekamp and reappointed Garet Clark, Robert Gleason, Odelia "Dea" Hurston, Judy McDonald, Bennett Peji, Victoria Reed, and Randy Robbins.

John Venekamp is a successful real estate broker and marketing expert. A great advocate and supporter of the arts in New York City, Mr. Venekamp worked with numerous arts organizations there including the New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center Performing Arts, and Twyla Tharp Dance Company. Since moving to San Diego, Mr. Venekamp has been very active in the local arts community. Mr. Venekamp resides in Rancho Santa Fe.

Garet Clark, a native of San Diego, was a banker specializing in trust, investment, and private banking services from 1962 until 2004, when he retired as Region President of Northern Trust. He is a past president of the La Jolla Rotary Club and is currently a member of the Downtown San Diego Rotary Club. For eight months in 2002, Mr. Clark served as the Interim Managing Director of The Old Globe Theatre.

Robert H. Gleason is the Chief Financial Officer and General Counsel for Evans Hotels and an adjunct faculty member of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at San Diego State University. An active board member at The Old Globe, Robert also volunteers for the U.S. Bank San Diego County Advisory Board, the board of the San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center, and the national board of the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund.

Dea Hurston is a former school teacher and has been active in the community as an arts advocate and fundraiser for over 20 years. She has served on the boards of San Diego Black Ensemble Theatre, Eveoke Dance Theatre, Sledgehammer Theatre, Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary and Friends of Vista Hill and the advisory boards for the San Diego Repertory Theatre, Common Ground Theatre, Mo'olelo Theatre and Mainly Mozart.

Judy McDonald is very active in the philanthropic and non-profit community. She is on the boards of the Parker Foundation, San Diego Grantmakers and NTC Foundation and is a past board member of LEAD San Diego, Junior League and Citizen's Board for Desegregating Schools.

Bennett Peji is a specialist in district branding and design. He serves as an AIGA national board member, a Public Art Committee member for National City and is incoming president of the Asian Business Association. He is one of the co-founders of the AIGA Center for Cross-cultural Design and is San Diego's first AIGA Fellow honoree. His firm, Bennett Peji Design, focuses on helping revitalize organizations, cities and cultures through district branding.

Victoria Reed has been an art critic/writer for over twenty years publishing in Artweek, San Diego Tribune, San Diego edition of the Los Angeles Times, Scottsdale Daily Progress and other publications. She has a Ph.D. in Art History, UCLA, 1998 and M.A. Art History, Arizona State University and has served on the Commission for Arts and Culture's Public Art Committee for over four years.

Randy Robbins is a principal architect at Austin Veum Robbins Partners, a San Diego based architectural firm. Robbins has over thirty years experience in architecture and interior design and has won numerous design awards. Robbins was appointed to the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture in 2002 and currently serves as the Chair of the Commission's Public Art Committee. Robbins also serves as Chair of the C Street Master Plan Public Art Advisory Committee and as a member of the North Embarcadero Visionary Plan Public Art Committee.

The mission of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture is to vitalize the city by integrating arts and culture into community life while supporting the region's cultural assets and showcasing San Diego as an international cultural destination.

For more information please call the Commission office at (619) 236-6778 or visit the Commission website at **www.sandiego.gov/arts-culture**.

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